

19 November 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 19 November Meeting of the "Indochina Steering Group"

25X1A 1. I arrived at the meeting a few minutes late. [REDACTED] was discussing the status of [REDACTED] forces are to be withdrawn from Laos and [REDACTED] eventually replaced by a total of eight [REDACTED]. It is not likely that any [REDACTED] will be ready before April. This means they will not be available for use during this dry season.

25X6

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25X6

25X6 2. There was a lengthy and complicated discussion of two contingency studies which have been underway; one was ordered by the President and deals with [REDACTED] contingency study. An inter-agency working group [REDACTED] (the CIA man) dealing with this has met only once. No paper is in preparation yet. The essential question to be dealt with concerns [REDACTED]. A second contingency study, instigated by Kissinger, is much more elaborate and deals with Indochina as a whole. It is to include a detailed political scenario of future US actions to be taken. The scenario is nowhere near ready. Some of the related contingency plans are in early stages of preparation; an intelligence annex has been done under [REDACTED] auspices. Kissinger apparently expects that the Indochina study will be completed by about 1 December. Both of these contingency studies confusingly embrace varying aspects of work also being done in connection with NSSM 99 (see below).

25X6

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25X1A 3. [REDACTED] reported that the operation against Ban Ban has been slipped one week. Meanwhile, [REDACTED] indicates some enemy awareness of the plan. At this point, I said that I thought when Ban Ban was being discussed by this group last week that there was a clear

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consensus that it was not advisable. Yet, the operation is approved. I thought we should earn our pay by taking positions on matters of this kind and making the consensus available to those making the decision. In response,

25X1A [REDACTED] pointed out that the Director and others were well aware of the negative aspects of the operation but chose to move ahead with it. The original field proposal has been rather drastically scaled down. It is to involve a raid in force and a quick withdrawal after destruction of supplies--it is not to be a seize-and-hold operation. The field plan for refugees has also been isolated from the Ban Ban plan and is being weighed separately.

25X1A 4. [REDACTED] reported on the recent Washington Order of Battle conference. He noted that intelligence is seriously declining in South Vietnam. This is due to less contact between forces and fewer numbers of prisoners and documents. 25X1D
25X1D Enemy units are small. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As ARVN forces take on increasing responsibilities, the problem will intensify because ARVN forces are not "intelligence-minded." 25X1A

25X1A [REDACTED] seconded all of this and pointed out that the situation concerning our knowledge of enemy OB and manpower in Cambodia is even worse. It was agreed that [REDACTED] would 25X1A do up a memo on this and it will be used in an effort to crank up DOD and the field to take steps to improve the situation. 25X1A [REDACTED] pointed out in particular that we would be hard put, in the light of current information, to be very confident about our ability to monitor and verify any cease-fire.

25X1A 5. I reported that we intended to produce a memo on the dangers ahead in Cambodia during the first week in December. I mentioned also [REDACTED] forthcoming trip to Laos and gave the group the background on the Director's request that we plan this type of trip. I also asked for a status report from other members of the group on what gives with NSSM 99. The short answer to this is that there is a great deal of material and a vast range of disagreements among those working on the problem. An intelligence annex of some sort has been done by OER

25X1A [REDACTED] and was made available within the Agency for comment about a week ago. It was said that OCI has seen this. Other papers are expected in rather considerable

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volume some time Monday or Tuesday of next week. It seems very clear that we will all have a very short deadline for the preparation of comments. A Senior Review Group meeting is scheduled for 25 November and the status of responses to NSSM 99 is to be taken up by the principals at that time. I suggested (and it was agreed) that SAVA undertake to insure that all appropriate parts of the Agency have in fact seen and commented on all of the papers that relate to this exercise.

25X1A

6. [REDACTED] raised the question of next year's Presidential elections in South Vietnam. He thought we should discuss what action the US should take in this regard. Thieu may not be the best man and there should be plenty of lead time available to insure that the matter is thought through. [REDACTED] agreed and said we would take this up at our next meeting.

25X1A

25X1A

7. [REDACTED] reported on his conversation with General Clay about methodologies concerning bombing results. The meeting went well.

25X1A

8. [REDACTED] reported that the Sihanoukville post mortem has been well received in PFIAB circles. [REDACTED] reported no indications as yet of any fall-off [REDACTED]

25X1A

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25X1D

9. Two matters of interest to OCI emerged at the end of the meeting. The group renewed an expression of interest in an eventual memo on developments in North Vietnam since Ho's death. I said we were still planning to come to grips with this. I would like to be able to tell the group at the next meeting approximately when we can complete such a memo. Second, [REDACTED] raised his concern over the increasing numbers of [REDACTED]

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25X1A

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25X1D

[REDACTED] This seemed to indicate some kind of build-up and he asked what is the level of Chinese strength in Laos at which we begin to sound the alarm. I mentioned our difficulty in reporting on some aspects of this since we are not at the moment privy to the details of US bombing operations. These operations have obviously caused the Chinese concern and they are taking steps to protect themselves with additional forces. The fact of US bombing operations in this area came as a surprise to virtually all of the group. [REDACTED] offered to try to obtain details on the US operations.

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Deputy Director of Current Intelligence

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25X1A

25X6

1 [redacted] recenting & [redacted] [redacted] Thau raining. Not likely to be available before April. [redacted] to be withdrawn (costly - no face-saving). Southern Laos likely to suffer in the meantime.

25X6

Many expectations they will be available this dry season.

25X6

[redacted] Contingencies Study - Pres-directed

25X6

What [redacted] doing re Cambodia
Has met only once; no paper in prep yet

Indochina Contingencies Study (K-instigated) by 1 sec or so.

Plans & political scenario (in a bust)

This pretty well coordinated but plans being worked on now

Intel annex done by ONE

Ban Ban has shipped a week.

25X6

25X6

[redacted] some NVN awareness.

Approval - raid & get out.
refugee plan separated out.

25X1A

[redacted] reflected concerns to DCI.
DCI got plenty of other side of coin

25X1A

2. [redacted] - OP conference. Intel declining in SVN. (Less contact, prisoners, documents.) Unit arrangements are loosening ARVN not intel-minded

25X1D

CP & manpower situation
Can station help?

25X1A

[redacted] memo

25X1D

Can't even worse only

25X1A

[redacted] NSSM #99

Pres election next yr. What should we be doing? [redacted] to take up next meeting. Fragility of SVN polit structure. Is there the man? Sensitive but wrong to leave to just a handful to decide.

25X1A

st.R to do a memo for use in cranking up DOD & field. Will have trouble verifying any close fire.

25X1D

25X1A

Clay conversation. Went well. Methodologies for calculating effects of bombing of logistics facilities.

25X1A

Dont strike

DCI sent Schanoukville post-mortem to Adm Anderson. Well-received. Synthesis clearly K's or Pres's.

25X1A

25X1D

No fall off yet in [redacted]

A year After Ho in Progress?

25X1A

Ly to Loi - open a channel to NVN.

25X1D

Chinese in No. Laos?

What about the concern?

W/ld to find out about F-4's.

Bombing Route 19

25X1A

to get details

How
much
so
enough
to sound
the alarm?

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11 March 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: North Vietnam Order of Battle

25X1A

1. Following the meeting of the "brethren" in SAVA this morning, I talked with [REDACTED] of NPIC and [REDACTED] of IAS to see how feasible it might be to launch a special PI effort in hopes of obtaining more precise Order of Battle data than we now have concerning North Vietnam.

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2. Unfortunately, there is no PI technique likely to help us with this problem. In the Soviet Union where the PIs made substantial inroads in recent years, [REDACTED]

25X1B

[REDACTED] Furthermore, most North Vietnamese forces are scattered about in local camps. The nature of the camps is such as to be almost impossible to distinguish from non-military facilities.

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3. I asked [REDACTED] to check with military departmental PI units around town to see if they had made any progress on this problem. [REDACTED] did so and reported that none has made a break-through.

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25X1A

4. [REDACTED] did say that there may be some "marginal areas" in which the PIs can be of assistance. He offered to set up a meeting of NPIC and IAS PIs to begin a dialogue with intelligence analysts on this topic. I explained that [REDACTED] people in OEP were the ones largely responsible and we agreed that Paul could contact [REDACTED] who will be glad to arrange a get-together.

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25X1A

Deputy Director of Current Intelligence

Distribution:

25X1A

- 1 - [REDACTED] VA
- 1 - [REDACTED] DD/OEP
- 1 - [REDACTED] DC/FR/DDP
- 1 - [REDACTED] Board of National Estimates

25X1A

- 1 - [REDACTED] OCT/VN

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11 March 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 11 March Meeting of "Indochina Steering Group"

1. Following are some of the highlights of this morning's meeting in SAVA.

25X1A 2. [REDACTED] reported that he has forwarded a package put together by him and other Agency officers on the question [REDACTED] 25X1C
25X1A [REDACTED] fronting on Indochina. The 40 Committee yesterday authorized another [REDACTED] mission. Assuming another failure in this program, the outlook either for U-2 or SR-71 coverage would seem very good.

25X1A 3. [REDACTED] reported that he will chair a new USIB Committee which will be put to work beginning tomorrow defining the needs for intelligence over the next several years in Indochina, outlining the affects on these needs of US withdrawals from the area and calculating the intelligence resources needed to keep the intelligence adequate.

25X1A 4. We all agreed that it is becoming of increasing importance to be able to answer with better precision than we now can the status and strength of North Vietnam forces remaining in reserve in the north as fighting flares in Laos. [REDACTED] agreed to examine this proposition. We are very dependent on the Pentagon for strength figures and the strength figures are very soft. It was agreed that I would look into the possibility of using photography to help us get a better handle on this.

25X1A 5. [REDACTED] reported on the friendly withdrawal from [REDACTED] 25X6□
25X1A [REDACTED] Communist losses were very heavy. Some [REDACTED]
25X6□ [REDACTED] at nearby site [REDACTED] have moved quite a bit farther to the west. There is uncertainty as to how the Cambodians reacted during the attacks on [REDACTED] They may have bugged out on their own. 25X1A
25X1A 25X1A

25X1A 6. [REDACTED] reported on the basis of word from a returning OER traveler that relationships between the Saigon Station and MACV are at an all-time low. The pretext used

by MACV was the recent OCI publication of an item concerning South Vietnamese military planning. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is doing what he can to help [REDACTED] get this straightened out. It will probably require the Director's intervention at some point.

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25X1A

7. [REDACTED] reported that for the next six months (until September) two of the six [REDACTED] aircraft flying over Laos will be gone for overhauling and repairs. MACV has no replacements. This could cost us some intelligence.

25X1D

8. We agreed that [REDACTED] (who attended the meeting) will be the DDI hauncho on the Thailand aspects of NSSM-99.

25X1A

9. [REDACTED] noted that there had been some drying up [REDACTED] in the corridors in the past week. [REDACTED] is actually up but this has caused processing difficulties in the field. It was agreed that [REDACTED] would get in touch with [REDACTED] and see what could be done to speed things up. In the meanwhile [REDACTED] reported that [REDACTED]

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Deputy Director of Current Intelligence

Distribution:

- 1 - D/OCI
- C/PS
- C/MGT
- File
- 1 - Chrono
- 1 - C/PB
- 1 - PDB